

DRAMATICS

An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

CHILDREN'S OPERA

By GOLDA KAUFMAN

SO YOU ARE OVERWORKED!

By ROBERT O. WISE, JR.

WRITING THE PAGEANT

By CHARLES R. TRUMBO
and POLLYANN

THE SOPHISTICATE FROM INDIANA: COLE PORTER

By DELWIN B.
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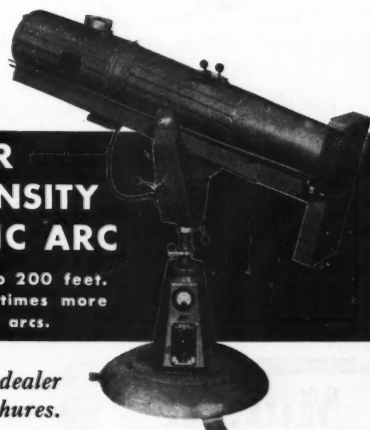
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DRAMATICS

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ary schools, and to promote theater as a wholesome recreation for adults, high school students, and children. Critical and editorial opinions expressed in these pages, whether or not analogous to the aims of the National Thespian Society and the policies of DRAMATICS, are solely those of the authors, and neither the Society nor DRAMATICS assumes any further responsibility other than the actual printing. DRAMATICS will not be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts and photographs unless self-addressed envelopes and sufficient postage are included.

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Golda Kaufman, San Francisco, California, introduces us to this musical Children's theater in her inspiring article, *Children's Opera*. Here is indeed a challenging project for all other cities throughout our country.

ROBERT O. Wise, Jr., formerly sponsor of Troupe 192, Keokuk, Iowa, Sr. High School, and now director of drama and sponsor of Cast 11 of Delta Psi Omega at Rochester Junior College, Rochester, Minn., offers some timely advice to all play directors in his article, *So You Are Overworked!* His answer: Let the students share the responsibilities. The principal aim of high school theater is student participation in all areas. The director, as is stated by Mr. Wise, has missed a golden opportunity to do some real teaching if he is doing all the planning, creating, and the actual work required for a superior performance of a full length play.

LAST summer Ernest Sublett, Sponsor, Troupe 353, Abilene, Texas, toured the summer theaters on the West Coast. In his brief article, *Search for Magic*, he opens for all of us bright and shining vistas of superb theater in action. "I can echo the cry of the Forty-Niners, 'Thur's gold in them thar hills!'"

CHARLES Trumbo in his series on Pageantry continues with *Writing the Pageant*. He uses an excellent outline for illustration of the pageant, *Man's Reach*, presented annually at Ambridge, Pennsylvania. Here is a form of theater that can be essentially high school theater.

DR. Dusenbury continues his series on the musical theater with a short, but comprehensive biography of Cole Porter. Your editor feels that this series is most valuable, for Dr. Dusenbury's thumb sketched biographies of the composers of our time are valuable additions to all Thespian and school libraries. *The Sophisticate from Indiana: Cole Porter* opens new vistas of this remarkable composer with digressions of Vincent Youmans, and the team DeSylva, Brown and Henderson.

"THEY Don't Need to Speak" is the subtitle of the Children's Theater article edited and in this case written by Frieda Reed, editor of this department, and co-sponsor of Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa., Sr. High School. Miss Reed stresses the entertaining value of pantomime, its reception by both student, teen-age, and adult audiences, and the interest of both cast and stage-crews. Here is another challenge to all schools to innovate something new to their dramatic arts program.

Happy New Year

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THIS IS THE YEAR!

ALTHOUGH we opened our celebration of the 30th birthday of The National Thespian Society last fall, the year 1959 is really its actual observance. Thirty years ago in 1929 a dream of a national dramatic arts honor society for secondary schools became a reality when 71 high schools affiliated with our society. In the past 30 years from 71 schools your organization has now grown to 1865.

Our founders, Dr. Paul F. Opp, Fairmont State College, Fairmont, W. Va., Dr. Earl W. Blank, Northeastern State College, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and Harry Leeper, Councilor Emeritus, Regional Director of West Virginia, and sponsor of Troupe 3, East High School, Fairmont, W. Va., must have watched with humble pride the national acceptance of their dream during the past 30 years. Would that Earnest W. Bavelly, the first national secretary, were with us to join in our celebration!

Our official organ, DRAMATICS Magazine, likewise was published first as an annual in October under the editorship of Harry T. Leeper. At that time it was named "The High School Thespian." With only 71 troupes its circulation must have been approximately 1500. Today DRAMATICS, now published eight months of the year, averages 31,000 copies monthly, or a total of 248,000 copies annually. We do indeed have cause for celebration of our 30th birthday.

But no organization can live on its past achievements and services. There is always a "tomorrow and a tomorrow and a tomorrow." Actually only the foundation has been firmly laid; now we must build our permanent mansion. Robert Browning says it much better than I: "A man's reach must exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for." By 1960 your National Council hopes Charter 2000 will be granted, your magazine will have a monthly circulation of 40,000. Someday, and in the not too distant future, The National Thespian Society will have 5000 affiliated schools.

As I See It . . .

What is the reason for this phenomenal growth? First of all is its premise that the high school theater is an excellent training center for all students for adult living. Secondly, the many services made available to all member schools; as, royalty adjustment for schools which need such help, its library loan facilities, its distribution annually of complimentary publications, its advisory services on all phases of theater, and finally its excellent stewardship. Space will not permit the listing of individual services to our membership except to mention that many of our schools benefit financially annually. We are also proud of the fact that membership fees have not been increased since 1929 — nor is any such increase contemplated in the near future.

This is our year to celebrate — and we shall do just that in our state conferences throughout the nation. So far I have attended our 30th Anniversary Conferences at the Wheaton, Illinois, Community High School, Mrs. Birney Lytle, Sponsor; Salem, Indiana, High School, Myrtle Bush, Sponsor; Fort Hill High School, Cumberland, Maryland, Helen Smith, Sponsor; Lincoln High School, Canton, Ohio, Elizabeth Bolster, Sponsor; Memorial High School, St. Mary's, Ohio, Lillian Codington, Sponsor; New

Woodward High School, Cincinnati, Ohio, Ronald Aug, Sponsor; and Alabama College, Montevallo, Alabama, Florence Pass, Sponsor. All these conferences were superior in programming, in attendance, and in hospitality. One just could not help coming away from these conferences without feeling proud that he was a Thespian. My personal thanks to all our Regional Directors and Sponsors who made these conferences possible. They really made our 30th Birthday a notable occasion.

Other conferences are in the making this coming Spring: in Florida, Michigan, Oregon, New York, Washington, Pennsylvania, Indiana (northern), Georgia, Massachusetts, and Arkansas. I am sure even more will be scheduled, if not this coming Spring, next fall. We hope to climax our celebration at our national conference at Indiana University in June, 1960.

This is indeed our year to celebrate our 30 years of growth — 30 years of promoting the finest in theater arts, 30 years of laying solid foundations of honor, appreciation, cooperation, respect, tolerance, and ingenuity — all ingredients so necessary for achievement and happiness in adult living. For the next 30 years the National Thespian Society will continue with its national program for all interested students in our high schools everywhere.

KENTUCKY'S NEW THESPIAN DIRECTOR



William J. Posavac

WILLIAM J. Posavac, Sponsor of Thespian Troupe 1840, Reidland High School, Paducah, Kentucky, is our newly appointed Regional Director for Kentucky. In the spring Mr. Posavac hopes to hold a Thespian Conference at his school in commemoration of our 30th Anniversary. We are delighted to have Mr. Posavac on our Advisory Council, which is composed of all Regional Directors.

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SEARCH FOR MAGIC

By ERNEST SUBLETT

I GO to the theater with the trust that a five-year old enters into a game of make-believe. I want to feel for the span of a couple of hours that on the stage there are actors who have slipped behind the masks of individuals who are much more interesting than I am, than they themselves are. I want all the workers of backstage magic to create for me an aura that will heighten my sense of the beautiful and quicken my pulses to the point that I am disembodied and float in space just within the footlights. In short, I want to be enchanted by sheer theatricality!

So, as a theater goer I am constantly searching for the narcosis of the lively imagination that can transform a platform into a palace, a breath into a passion. Sometimes (too few alas!) my search has netted me thrilling evenings, but in the void of the unimaginative that separates the rare oases of delight I glean every nugget, no matter how small.

Every moment with the inimitable Marceau I climb his flights of stairs, pause for breath at the landings, and dreadingly contemplate the flights still unscaled. With Giles Segal I view the patterns of light that filter through the water, and I vibrate with the rhythms of all the creatures of the depths. I share the humiliations of Bip, the lion tamer; and I hear the hurdy-gurdy of the streets of Segal's Paris blending into the applause of all of us who had forgotten the passing of mere prosaic time.

Another oasis before I start panning for nuggets: and I found it within four walls of a musky little theater seating a handful of audience. I found it in view of a bridge painted across the wall and ceiling of the little room. In a circle of light Arthur Miller and a half-dozen actors took me into a tenement within smelling distance of the waterfront, and I lived with Marc Lawrence the torment of Eddie in a love that destroyed a hard won security.

Even another oasis of delight: within the crumbling walls of Ashland, Oregon's Chautauqua, a building that gave another era the very thrills I seek; and despite the effort to recreate there the stage the Bard himself trod, I was in ancient Troy where I weighed with the worthiest warriors of the city the matter of returning Menelaus' stolen Helen. I loved with Troilus and Cressida; suffered with them when their love went awry. I felt within my breast the nobility, the tranquility, that followed Hector to his death at the hands of Achilles' cowardly Myrmidons. I reveled with Helen and Paris: I was drunk from the wine of their empty goblets. I came away enchanted!

And in my panning I didn't miss a nugget! In the restored opera house of a once thriving gold mining town my heart sang the ballad of Silver Heels and the man who loved her till the day he died in her mountain. In Glenn Hughes' Penthouse Theater I was concerned with Harpagon for his beloved money, schemed with his offspring as they plotted their love affairs, and had a good last laugh with Harpagon and my fellow audience at a miser's sharp wedding bargain. And it was with reluctance that I doffed my cavalier frills and furbelows and went out into the chatter of the theater foyer. I had a rare moment of exaltation when a love bridged itself in the middle of the night across the span of May to December. I knew the fire, the splendor, the collapse of an Antony in the striking design of a costume. Then I waltzed in gay abandon in the opulent splendor of a ballroom *At The Grand* — forgot the cut of my modern clothes as I hissed the villain of a hit of yesterday, *Rags to Riches*. All of these were rare unforgettable moments of high theatricality.

After seventeen evenings in west coast summer theater I can echo the cry of the Forty Niners, "Thar's gold in them thar hills!" It was my delight to find the illusive make-believe of the theater all through the west in veins, in nuggets, and in worked out diggings to bring back with me, to glean, to cherish, to share, and more still to inspire me and my students.

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CHILDREN'S OPERA

By **GOLDA KAUFMAN**

THE Children's Opera Association has become quite an institution in San Francisco, California. Now in its sixth year Children's Opera puts on a performance for the public every month, filling the Marines' Memorial Theater with happy children who enjoy seeing musical and dramatic versions of their favorite fairy stories.

The San Francisco Children's Opera Association, a non-profit organization, was inspired and started by Heddy and Norbert Gingold, refugees from Hitler's Austria, and then later from France. This brilliant, musical husband and wife team, with no children of their own, started writing and composing in Marseilles, France, putting to music the beloved classic children's stories. Norbert, the husband, wrote the music, and Heddy, the lyrics and dramatic scripts, thus working together to produce librettos of such favorites as *Sinbad the Sailor*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Snow White and Rose Red*, as well as some original stories of their own. They produced with much success *Les Operettes pour Enfants*. Later, the Gingolds came to New York, but decided that San Francisco was the city they would choose in which to continue their work, and so in 1947 the Children's Opera was reborn in the city by the Golden Gate.

Mr. and Mrs. Gingold call their productions light operas, written expressly for children, and with the idea that they



The Boot of Mister Ticklewood, a one-act opera, presented by the San Francisco Children's Opera Company

should be performed almost exclusively by children.

Two companies of nearly sixty children rehearse concurrently, and each company puts on its opera in alternate months from October to May. All that is required of the would-be performers is that they be able to read a script and sing a simple song. There are no auditions for newcomers, for quite often children are shy when asked to show what they can do. Thus Mrs. and Mr. Gingold meet with the child and parent to determine his eligibility for one of the companies.

But the shyness soon disappears, and the children, who for the most part, start in the chorus, are soon clamoring for parts, a line or two to say, a little couplet to sing.

There is also the orchestra, composed of teen-age child musicians, who play trumpet, cello, violin, drums, flute, etc. — indeed an important part of any Children's Opera.

One company rehearses on Monday and Thursday; the other, on Tuesday and Friday — each rehearsal lasting two hours. There are evening rehearsals for teen-agers and the few adults taking part in both companies, and Saturday afternoon rehearsals for the orchestra. Parents of the participating children say they never have trouble getting the children to rehearsals. They all seem to enjoy the twice-weekly sessions, although the Gingolds don't hesitate to scold, cajole, and correct the young performers.

All the children seem to develop a sense of responsibility not only toward their own roles, but toward those of other members of the cast. They prompt each other, make suggestions and anxiously watch a child who has a "part" for the first time. One of the nicest things that develops is the sense of pride in another's success in a particular role, and the quick and generous way the children compliment each other during and after performances. Many performances bring forth a real hero or heroine who are quick-witted enough to help a situation if someone forgets a line or cue, and very rarely does the audience realize that one of the performers "goofed."

The companies are run in repertory style, and although Mr. and Mrs. Gingold switch the operas from one company to another, the children develop favorites, and they will change from the Monday-Thursday group if the Tuesday-Friday group is going to perform an opera they enjoyed playing the year before. Children who have taken bigger roles will often "go back" to the chorus, some-

(Continued on Page 31)



Sleeping Beauty, another production of the San Francisco Children's Opera

SO YOU ARE OVERWORKED!

By ROBERT O. WISE, JR.

"I M doing too much work" is a thought that often enters a high school drama director's mind. The thoughts, "I'm spending too many hours on the job; I never have time to live my own life," usually follow in quick succession. Rare indeed is the drama teacher to whom these words are unfamiliar.

Before I go any further, it may be well to state that every drama teacher should realize that his work is more time-consuming than straight classroom teaching. When the other teachers are going home, he is going to rehearsal; or of an evening when the other teachers are watching their favorite TV programs, he is returning to school to supervise scenery construction. This is unescapable, but the number of hours spent by the instructor and the magnitude of the task can be reduced, and that is the purpose of this article.

When one evaluates his work, the director should pause and ask himself, "Am I doing too much myself? Am I doing a task that should be done by the students?" Many times the cause of a teacher's overworking is that the instructor has not discovered how much his students can do, and are willing to do. Many capable students can perform tasks far more complex than folding programs, painting scenery, or replacing light bulbs. These are certainly necessary functions, but there is more, much more that the students can accomplish.

In deciding how much can be left to the student, the director should use as his criteria the two objectives of secondary school theater. One objective is presenting wholesome, worthwhile entertainment. The other aim is exclusively that of educational theater—to train and instruct its participants. For a really purposeful and successful drama program, both of these objectives must be given equal consideration. The students should be allowed to do everything that they can do well without jeopardizing the effectiveness of the production. Don't make the mistake of underestimating their abilities. It may be well to consider the various areas of theater, such as directing, acting, designing of scenery, costumes, lights, and the business part of theater, and then decide for each of these fields what should be the function of the students, and what should be the teacher's.

Directing is probably as complex a job as there is in the theater. It takes a great deal of training and practical experience before one has begun to master the principles of the art of direction. Also, the part of directing that is leadership and the uniting of all the

personalities involved in a play is a function only partially mastered with much experience, many mistakes, and maturity. Anyone who has witnessed the productions of a college directing class has had these two facts brought to his attention rather forcefully. To respect the audience's right for a good performance, the drama trained teacher is best qualified to direct the high school play. If it is felt that it would be valuable for the student to have directorial experience, the practice of one Iowa high school may be a solution. Their Thespian troupe meets bi-weekly, and at each meeting a student-directed one-act play or a cutting from a three-act play is produced. The production is then discussed and criticized by the troupe. Everyone present realizes that it is an educational experience, and no matter how ill the results sometimes are, no

rector can then proceed with casting and production.

Another great time-saver to the director is a student assistant. Choose a leader and keep him close to you during the first weeks of rehearsal. Explain carefully what you are trying for in the various scenes and point out the problems. You will discover that before too long you can leave the rehearsal in the student director's hands for a short period while you go out to supervise the crews, or meet the various interruptions that always occur. Rehearsal doesn't need to come to a stand-still because the director is absent. Time is saved.

An area that shouldn't take too much consideration, but needs to be mentioned is that of acting. It is not unheard of for a high school to do a play, and the teacher to carry a major role—the Stage Manager in *Our Town* is an example.



As You Like It, Troupe 415, Brooklyn Park High School, Baltimore, Maryland, Glenn Fickel, Sponsor

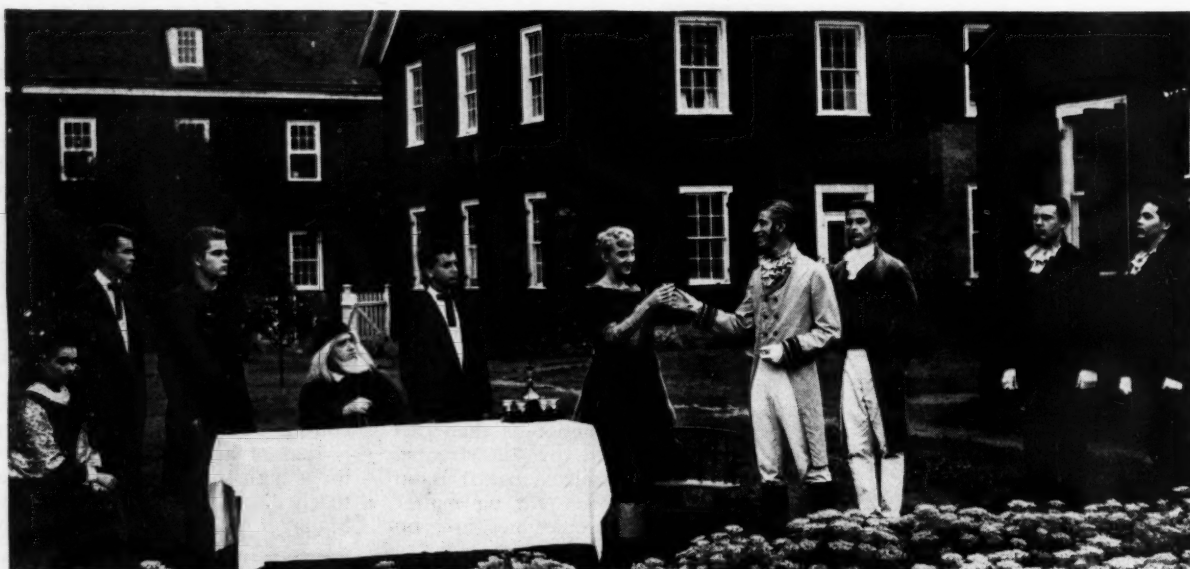
one is upset because no one paid for a ticket.

One directorial function where more student participation may be realized is in that of play selection. After the director is first satisfied with several plays, he can then give the students a voice in the final selection by nominating his list of suitable plays from which the students may pick the specific one. In composing his list, the director will take into consideration such things as size of cast, variety in type from previous productions, settings required, etc. While this procedure may seem a greater task than picking an individual script, the drama teacher usually becomes familiar with enough plays that he can compose a satisfactory slate by consulting only the catalogues. For example, if the next production is to be a comedy, he may nominate *Harvey*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and *Heaven Can Wait* from just his remembrance that they are good. After the students designate their choice, the di-

The rule for this is "Don't!" If a play calls for a characterization which is so difficult that there is no student who can carry it, don't do the play until the time when such a student comes along. One will. A teacher is definitely usurping the place of a student if he takes a major role.

The next areas are those of the technical fields: scenery, lighting, costumes, etc. It should seldom be necessary for the teacher to have to pick up a paint brush, needle, or gelatin sheet. This may seem too elementary to mention, but the author can remember his first plays, and nobody worked harder physically than he did. Teen-agers like to work if it has a purpose, and if they feel that they are needed. If they find that all there is for them to do is stand around and hand someone a nail or a paint brush, they won't be there long. Their make-up calls for action.

A far more common fault of directors
(Continued on Page 30)



A beautiful outdoor scene of the historical pageant, *Man's Reach*, Ambridge, Pennsylvania

TO build you must have tools. For this project of building, writing a pageant, some of the tools you need are a big healthy writing pad, something to write with, an eraser, and your notes.

You have gathered all your material. You have exhausted every possible source that you can think of for historical information about your community. We are ready to write the pageant.

The two main types of pageantry have already been mentioned – the social that concerns itself with some ideal as that set forth by Education, Peace, International Goodwill, and other abstract subjects; and the historical that concerns itself with the development of a given community of either local, national, or international fame.

Technically speaking there are five different classifications of pageantry that may be divided into the two main branches, the social and historical. They are the panoramic pageant, the dramatic pageant, the epic pageant, the pageant-

PAGEANTRY

Writing the Pageant

By **CHARLES R. TRUMBO**
and **POLLYANN**

drama, the dramatic festival, and the lyrical pageant.

A panoramic pageant consists of a series of scenes depicting historical developments, but not built around one main event. A dramatic pageant is built around some main event and has more form. An epic pageant concerns itself with some particular epic event, such as the Renaissance or the discovery of America and is in a romantic vein. Pageant-drama is really a drama on a grand scale with a heroic and romantic theme, such as the popular pageant dramas, *The Lost Colony*, *Unto These Hills*, and *The Common Glory*. A dramatic festival is one in which a chosen subject is depicted in spectacular fea-

tures of dances, choruses, tableaux, all woven together with an allegorical or poetic treatment. It may be a celebration of the spirit of a holiday in a well-composed form such as the Mardi Gras, the Tournament of Roses, or the Gasparilla Pirate Festival. A lyrical pageant is one with a dramatic theme and central action but presented in poetic forms, or choric passages, with dance scenes, group movements, and tableaux.

We have seen that the pageant-drama is the most popular form of pageantry in America. However, we are not quite ready to undertake such a huge task at this time. We will select the more simple type of pageant to write and present – the panoramic pageant. Remember, "A panoramic pageant consists of a series of scenes depicting historical developments, but not built around one main event."

At the time The American Pageant Association was formed around 1910, the script was called "the book." There were two ways of preparing the book



"A Sunday Afternoon Band Concert at Economy-of-Old," a scene from the pageant, *Man's Reach*, Ambridge, Pennsylvania

of a pageant. It was written by a professional author, or it was worked out as a community project by the episode directors and the author or editor. In many instances the writing of the book was part of the community project; this latter method was often preferred.

Modern pageant-dramas written by Paul Green and Kermit Hunter are referred to as "the script." Let us discard the old term of "the book" and refer to our written pageant as a script. If or when it appears in the printed form for distribution among the audience or spectators it becomes a book.

In times past a pageant committee appointed to present a panoramic pageant depicting the history of their local community, as we are now preparing to do, met together and decided upon the title of the pageant. Since the purpose of the pageant would already have been established, the general theme was at hand and ready made. The exact wording of the title was then chosen by the committee.

The committee then chose the particular episodes or events to be presented. The names of these events or episodes became the chapter headings of what was termed the pageant "book" because it was the result of the labor of so many people.

While writing our pageant, we are working in somewhat the same manner except that we are going to do most of the writing, just as do Mr. Green and Mr. Hunter. We are writing a panoramic pageant on the local history of our community. We have exhausted all our source material and are ready to put it down on paper.

We must bear in mind while we are writing that a pageant is much wider in scope than in an ordinary dramatic performance. A panoramic pageant does not aim at dramatic perfection as do the more professional pageant-dramas or symphonic dramas. Our pageant can be acted by any untrained person. All he needs is the desire or willingness to appear before an audience. Each episode or scene should show only one significant moment in the life of any individual or group of individuals who once lived in our community and who helped to develop it.

While you were gathering your material, you probably decided in your own mind what would make good episodes or scenes and mentally discarded those that you did not think were good. You then made a list of all these episodes or scenes. When you have finished, your outline will look very much like the synopsis of scenes in *Man's Reach* at Ambridge, Pennsylvania:

THE SCENES PRELUDE

Father Rapp's sermon to his people, delivered in this tranquil garden in the summer of 1830.

Act One

Scene 1 — Magistrates Office, Village of Iptingen, Kingdom of Wurtemberg, Germany (1804)



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Scene 2 — Outside the Home of Frederick Rapp, same Village, a day later

Scene 3 — A Home in Harmony, Pennsylvania (Spring, 1805)

Scene 4 — Father Rapp's Seat, overlooking Harmony, Pennsylvania (1814)

Scene 5 — Frederick's Business Office, Harmony, Pennsylvania (1823)

Scene 6 — Typical activities at Economy, Pennsylvania, in the "Golden Age" of 1830

Tableau 1 The Household
Tableau 2 The Store
Tableau 3 The Tailor Shop
Tableau 4 The Granary
Tableau 5 The Print Shop
Tableau 6 The Leaders

Act Two

Scene 1 — Gertrude in the Garden (1831)

Scene 2 — Mr. Sutton's Business Office in Pittsburgh

Scene 3 — The Graff Home in Philadelphia (1831)

Scene 4 — Frederick and Gertrude's Return from Philadelphia

Scene 5 — "Invasion of Utopia" by Count de Leon, "Great House" Gardens

Scene 6 — The Garden by Moonlight

Scene 7 — The Count's Departure from "Great House" Gardens (Spring, 1832)

Scene 8 — Attack on Economy, a few months later

Although we have not seen this particular pageant, we know that we can use this type of outline as a working guide or blueprint for building our local panoramic pageant. You may use as many or as few scenes as is necessary to cover your material. Your dialogue may be kept to a minimum or expanded, depending on the type of participants you have to work with you. It is an excellent example for us because it is a local historical pageant that has re-

(Continued on Page 29)

The Sophisticate from Indiana: Cole Porter

By DELWIN B. DUSENBURY

THE writers of the scenario for *Night and Day* (1946), the motion picture biography of Cole Porter, were puzzled by the lack of conflict or struggle from rags to riches in his life. Obviously a man born on an Indiana farm who became the owner of a sumptuous villa on the French Riviera and one of Europe's most gracious hosts must have encountered some barriers along the way. But for "the sophisticate from Indiana" life has been extremely generous. Fortunately for America's musical theater too Cole Porter has been generous by bringing to it the unique combination of the sentimental simplicity of the farm boy coupled with the sophisticated wit and cynicism of fashionable society. His delightful lyrics and gay music reflect a polished amalgam of American and European influences perfectly blended into productions which place Cole Porter along with George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and Rodgers and Hart as the major significant figures in the development and maturation of our popular musical theater.

Born on a 700 acre fruit farm near Peru, Indiana, in 1893, a grandson of a millionaire, Porter attended preparatory school where he was adept in foreign languages and graduated from Yale in 1913 where he was voted "the most entertaining man in his class." In college too, like Rodgers and Hart, he wrote and produced musical shows. Then, following his grandfather's wishes, he entered Harvard Law School. But his love of music which had been encouraged by his mother and his talents as a pianist led him to transfer to the Department of Music, especially when

his grandfather no longer threatened to disinherit him if he did so. Now it was but a step to Broadway.

His first Broadway production, *See America First* (1916), was a failure. Like many impressionable young men of the day, he "fled" to Europe and, interestingly enough, joined the French Foreign Legion. Still, he carried his music with him as the result of a remarkable gift from a Philadelphia friend—a portable piano which he could carry on his back like a knapsack. He entertained the soldiers and his friends by playing his own songs and began developing a catalogue of original songs which he would later use in his musical comedies.

Immediately after the war his music came to the attention of the eccentric comedian, Raymond Hitchcock, who engaged him to write the music for his revue, *Hitchy-Koo* of 1919. The show was very successful and enabled Porter to marry a beautiful socialite, buy a villa on the Riviera, and with the help of his grandfather's inheritance, the Cole Porters lived a lavish life of gay parties and foreign travel. Porter loved the fashionable social life and his travels enabled him to hear the native melodies of the Continent, the primitive rhythms of South Sea Islands, the voodoo rhythms and exotic drumbeats of Northern Africa, which were to serve as sources for the melodic beat of some of his best songs, notably, "Night and Day," "What Is This Thing Called Love," and "Begin the Beguine." He had studied harmony and counterpoint with the famed French composer, Vincent D'Indy, at the Schola Cantorum, but had resigned when he felt the French school was influencing



Photo, RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.
Fred Astaire, noted for his dancing and singing in the early Gershwin and Cole Porter musicals, as he appeared in *Gay Divorce* (1932), which Cole Porter especially tailored to his limited vocal range

his own sense of rhythm which was to become a Cole Porter trademark.

Although Porter contributed some music to *Greenwich Village Follies* (1924), the credit for re-planting firmly on his native soil must go to the producer, E. Ray Goetz, who wanted sophisticated and suave music for a musical comedy starring his wife, the charming Irene Bordoni. Actually, the show, *Paris* (1928), owed more of its success to the piquant French actress than to the music of Cole Porter, although "Let's Do It" is still a popular favorite. Porter's first complete score, including the popular



Photo, USO Camp Shows

Good News, an early DeSylva, Brown, and Henderson success, with its gay collegiate atmosphere and simplified staging, as noted in the illustration, provides an excellent choice of musical comedy suitable for high school production.

song, "You Do Something to Me," was written for *Fifty Million Frenchmen* (1929), followed by *Wake Up and Dream* (1929), and the revue, *The New Yorkers* (1930).

Before examining the major work of Cole Porter, however, a brief backward glance is necessary to complete the picture of America's musical theater of the "Twenties." The theater of the early triumphs of Cole Porter and his contemporaries was also the theater of a team of writers whose names were so closely linked together that it was difficult to determine where the work of one began and the others stopped. The team, DeSylva, Brown, and Henderson, however, was synonymous with all the vigor and vitality of the musical comedy of the Twenties. George "Buddy" DeSylva (1895-1950) was the dynamic spark of the trio. As a college student in California his songs had been accepted by Al Jolson so that he was encouraged to come to New York in 1919 where he collaborated on the lyrics for Gershwin's *La! La! Lucille*. He had supplied lyrics to the melodies of Victor Herbert and Jerome Kern, when he met Ray Henderson (1896-), who had been trained for serious music at the Chicago Conservatory. In 1922 DeSylva and Henderson teamed up with Lew Brown (1894-1958) and in 1924 they succeeded to George Gershwin's position as composers for George White's *Scandals*. Then, with the help of Lawrence Schwab they wrote their first musical comedy, *Good News* (1927).

Good News with its college campus background and collegiate characters indicated that musical comedy could escape from the "moonlight and roses" of costumed operetta. *Good News* with its rhythmic "Varsity Drag" and the popular "The Best Things in Life Are Free" swept to amazing success. In the same season the fabulous trio contributed the score to *Manhattan Mary* (1927), a great personal success for the comedian Ed Wynn. DeSylva, Brown, and Henderson continued to explore the contemporary American scene with *Hold Everything* (1928), which poked fun at the prize fighting profession; *Follow Through* (1929), their most popular production, which dealt with the problems of a golf professional and featured the dancing feet of Eleanor Powell in "Button Up Your Overcoat" and "My Lucky Star"; and *Flying High* (1930), their last show as a team, which featured the remarkable comedian Bert Lahr as an airplane mechanic who managed to get a plane into the air but could not bring it down. DeSylva then went to Hollywood as an executive for Paramount Pictures, while Brown and Henderson remained on Broadway to present *Hot-Cha* (1932), another Bert Lahr triumph, and *Strike Me Pink* (1933), a revue featuring the ebullient Jimmie Durante. In the meantime DeSylva had returned to New York to team up with another

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promising young composer of the day, Vincent Youmans, in writing *Take a Chance* (1932), which is remembered today as another stepping stone in the career of Ethel Merman whose interpretation of "Eadie Was a Lady" and "Rise and Shine" were "show-stoppers."

Take a Chance was Youmans' last Broadway score due to his untimely death and it in no way equalled his best productions, *No, No, Nanette* (1925) and *Hit the Deck* (1927). Vincent Youmans (1898-1946), a native of New York, studied music at an early age, but turned to engineering and business. During World War I, however, he produced musical shows for the Navy. His first score for *Two Little Girls in Blue* (1921) with lyrics by Ira Gershwin met with success; and in 1923 *Wildflower*, which included "Bambalina" in its score, established him as a composer with promise. The hilarious *No, No, Nanette*, after opening in Detroit, began its successful career with a year's run in Chicago and then came to Broadway where it had an unprecedented run for that day of 665 performances. At one time seventeen different companies were singing and dancing to "I Want To Be Happy" and "Tea for Two" in this country and abroad.

Louise Groody, the original "Nanette," gained even greater prominence as "Lou-lou" in *Hit the Deck*, in which her hilarious experiences as she followed a shy sailor she loves around the world trying to get him to propose marriage delighted audiences. Other Youmans' scores included *Through the Years* (1932), a

musical version of *Smilin' Through*; *Great Day* (1929); *Smiles* (1930) starring Marilyn Miller; and the motion picture, *Flying Down to Rio* (1933). Suffering from tuberculosis, Youmans was forced to retire from the theater, but as one critic noted, "in his time, he alone deserved to be ranked with Gershwin, Porter, Rodgers, and Kern." The musical theater of the day was warmed by the glowing radiance of Youmans' music and the brassy exuberance of DeSylva, Brown, and Henderson. But our musical theater needed wit and polish, and for this Cole Porter's *Gay Divorce* (1932) provided the necessary ingredients.

Gay Divorce began Porter's reign as "King Cole of Broadway." Fred Astaire, making his first appearance without his sister Adele, gaily danced and sang as the young hero who pursues the girl he is determined to marry, and the show met with immediate success. *Anything Goes* (1934) with a book by Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse was even more successful. Again Porter was fortunate in his choice of cast. William Gaxton, noted for his wit and breezy style, had teamed up with the wistful comedian, Victor Moore, in Gershwin's *Of Thee I Sing* (1931). Their appearance in *Anything Goes* established them, however, as one of the great teams of the musical theater. In addition to Gaxton and Moore the cast included Porter's favorite performer, Ethel Merman as "Reno Sweeney," an evangelist turned night club performer. Moore depicted "Moonface the Machine-gunner" (Pub-

(Continued on Page 28)

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The author has suggested certain minor revisions so that CLOUD SEVEN can be offered to any audience. These suggested changes are listed in the playbook.

The Story—

Newt Reece, who has spent most of his adult life discovering new ways to take the flavor out of frozen foods, rebels. He decides that while he's still young he should take some time for himself to do the things he really enjoys — like being with his wife. Mary, his wife, is aghast at this, it's not part of the proper suburban way of life at all. But Sally, his teen-age daughter, is delighted. The neighbors react in various ways; most of Mary's PTA friends are charmed by Newt; but the grocery and the bank cut off his credit immediately. Newt's boss is convinced Newt must have a better offer from another frozen foods firm, and he comes up with one lavish bid after another, in an attempt to persuade Newt to stay with the old firm. Through all this, Newt manages to straighten out the lives of a couple of unhappy neighbors and in the end persuades his wife that they're entitled to a little time and fun for themselves before old age sets in.

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Cast of **The Dancers**, which won a distinguished rating at the State Drama Festival, University of Virginia, March, 1958. Troupe 1491, Cradock High School, Portsmouth, Va., Cora Mae Fitzgerald, Sponsor, 1957-58

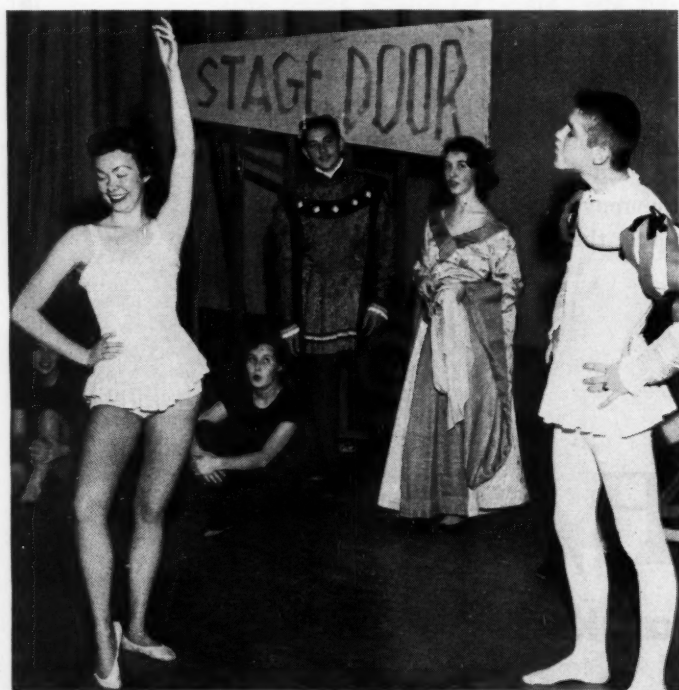


On Borrowed Time, Troupe 1015, Thomas Jefferson H. S., Council Bluffs, Iowa, R. H. Fanders, Sponsor

THESPIANS



Babes in Toyland, Troupe 771, Barrington, Ill., High School, Richard Johnson, Sponsor



Kiss Me Kate, Troupe 1623, Wantagh, N. Y., High School, Doris Heacox, Sponsor



Around the World in Eighty Days, Troupe 699, R. A. Long High School, Longview, Washington, Margaret Kohlmeier, Sponsor

IN ACTION



Barnaby, Troupe 789, Ypsilanti, Mich., High School,
Madge Iseminger, Sponsor



Vocal quartette, Christmas Talent Assembly, Troupe 1167, Will Rogers High School, Tulsa, Okla., Doris Niles, Sponsor



The Night of January 16th, Troupe 1462, West Plains, Mo., High School, Larry Clark, Sponsor



The Murder of Miriam, Troupe 1506, Central High School, Galveston, Texas, Charlotte Humphrey, Sponsor



Death Takes a Holiday, Troupe 258, Ensley High School, Birmingham, Ala., Florence Pass, Sponsor

TIME OUT FOR GINGER

Central High School, Bridgeport, Conn.

CAPITALIZING upon the fever that pervades most high schools when football starts, we selected *Time Out for Ginger* as our initial fall production. The plot was appropriate—a girl who aspires to play football—the one set easy to reproduce, the costumes modern, and the ten parts evenly divided between the sexes.

Unlike many teenage comedies in which adults frequently appear as ridiculous stereotypes outsmarted by their precocious offspring, the characters are plausible. An experienced actor should play Howard Carol, the father who starts complications by remarking to a high school audience that youngsters should be free to express themselves, for this leading role demands sympathetic interpretation to preserve the spirit of the play. The wise mother, the opinionated maid, the harassed principal, and father's banking associate provide opportunity for mature characterization while the three teenage daughters, the star athlete, and the youthful debater are "naturals" for adolescents. Because the plot divides into natural scenes, one can frequently rehearse without a full cast, a factor appreciated by directors who must consider the demands of conflicting activities.

The stage diagram requires a turning stairway, but we simplified construction and built ours parallel to the footlights with a landing extending off stage behind the living-room wall. We further reduced expenses by borrowing costumes and furniture from friends.

The Thanksgiving football game is a high point in the play so we scheduled performance for early December following our own traditional classic. When the dramatic club from the school of our gridiron rivals agreed to produce the same play on the night succeeding ours, publicity soared; for both schools staged pep assemblies using their varsity teams and cheer leaders to publicize the



The Absent-Minded Professor, Troupe 728,
Bartow, Fla., High School,
Charles Trumbo, Sponsor

event. We had a stimulating experience viewing each other's performance, and, while we lost the contest on the field, we won many friends with *Time Out for Ginger*.

ESTELLE L. McELROY
Sponsor, Troupe 598

THE ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR

Bartow, Florida, High School

WE were not looking for a non-royalty script when we decided upon *The Absent-Minded Professor* by L. Verne Slout for our junior class play, but we were looking for a vehicle to fit our character actor who we knew would be sure to "show up" for tryouts.

Our choice did show up, and we presented him with the part of Professor I. Q. Allen, a meek, mild, timid, and extremely absent-minded little man. His complications with two crooks who steal a valuable statue of Niobe from a nearby town and a young college girl who wants to become a "great actress" gave our local audience a riotous evening of clean, clever fun that kept them on the edge of their seats throughout the entire performance.

PLAYS OF THE MONTH

Edited By EARL BLANK

The play is exceedingly simple to produce. We gave the impression of a rustic summer cottage interior by painting long uneven stripes over the one-color interior set of the previous production. This produced the effect of old wallpaper that had been patched and repatched from time to time in a careless manner, and Indian blankets with a few pictures on the wall did the rest.

Furniture is a simple problem. The more "beat-up" looking the better. A professor's salary is not supposed to allow the very best in furniture for both a town and a country house. The biggest problem in props was locating the kerosene lanterns. It is amazing how scarce some items can get.

If you are a new club and are looking for a fast-moving play that is easy to produce, that has no royalty, and that is impossible for the poorest actor in your group not to make a hit in if he knows his lines, by all means give *The Absent-Minded Professor*.

CHARLES R. TRUMBO
Sponsor, Troupe 728

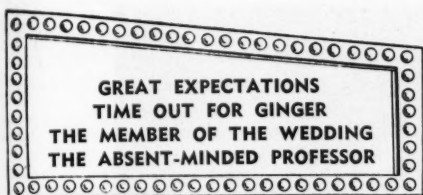
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Rocky River H.S., Cleveland, Ohio

"FIGHT! Fight! Fight!" No, this cry did not come from an enthusiastic throng of River rooters at a pep assembly or from the side lines in a boys' gym class. They are the thoughts that entered my mind as I stole silently in the back door of the auditorium in hopes of getting a prevue of the senior play, *Great Expectations*. For on the stage lay Pip, the lead character, towered over by Provis, the escaped convict. After



Time Out for Ginger, Troupe 598, Central High School, Bridgeport, Conn., Estelle McElroy, Sponsor



a debate as to whether I should run or remain, I quietly sat down and learned that I had not seen a brawl but part of the first scene of Charles Dickens' play. I was further convinced that this was not just an ordinary production when into the scene came Joe Gargery, with broad British accent, followed by his nagging wife, Mrs. Joe, and the Captain of the Guard." Thus ran the article in our high school paper. As you can gather, the very distinct characters of this great play made a great impression on our student body.

Miss Chadwick has made possible the staging of this classic in two scenes. We placed the garden scene inside the interior set. We used a very simple exterior—a garden wall, a scrim, and two sections of trees. All of Act I is in the garden, Act II in the interior, and scene 1 of Act III and scene 2 of Act III return to the garden.

We were fortunate to borrow antique furniture from the homes of some of the students. These furnishings made authentic-looking sets.

There are several reasons why this play is admirably suited to high school production. The costume bill is not high, for many of the girls' costumes can be borrowed from the community. The light plot is very interesting. The play presents a real challenge to acting abilities of high school students.

The policy of our dramatic organization has always been to select the play, on the recommendation of the director, by a student committee. The committee



Great Expectations, Troupe 65, Rocky River, Ohio, High School, Edith White, Sponsor

selects the play that it feels our students can do best. *Great Expectations* was presented first in 1949 and repeated in the fall of 1955. The novel plot, the British accent, and fast moving comedy parts all contributed to making it one of the most warmly received plays presented in our school.

EDITH A. WHITE
Sponsor, Troupe 65

THE MEMBER OF THE WEDDING Silverton, Oregon, High School

The *Member of the Wedding* is one of the most challenging and satisfying plays that a high school drama group could stage. The poignant story of Frankie, an adolescent Southern girl who wants so much to find happiness and Berenice Brown, the Negro cook who mothers her, is full of wise comment

and episodes which illuminate the pain of growing up.

We approached the play with some misgivings. The lead roles are long and difficult, and several Negro character roles posed a real problem of interpretation. These parts are not intended to be humorous, yet overacting could easily make them seem ridiculous. We spent many extra hours in determining what gestures and how much dialect could safely be used. The results were gratifying when no one laughed as the characters made their initial entrances.

Our major change in the play, outside of a few obvious cuts, was to switch the setting to an arena presentation. The suggested set calls for a backyard with a cut-away view of the kitchen of Frankie's house. Though the stage set would be preferable, the added impact of the characters at close range more than offset the disadvantage.

We were most surprised by the adult reaction to the play. Though most of the students did not seem to feel that they resembled Frankie, several adults said that they saw themselves as they had been when they were young. Several who had seen other performances of the play were most complimentary, also.

The Member of the Wedding is not easy, but it is worth the effort. The story of a young girl who sees in her sister's wedding a chance to escape from her world which seems to have more than its share of trouble and hurt is a moving experience and one which we shall never forget.

WILLIAM Z. IRON
Sponsor, Troupe 1337



Member of the Wedding, Troupe 1337, Silverton, Oregon, High School, William Iron, Sponsor, 1957-58

PUBLISHERS

Great Expectations, Samuel French, Inc., New York City
Time Out for Ginger, *The Member of the Wedding*, Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York City
The Absent-Minded Professor, Walter H. Baker Co., Boston



The Elves and the Shoemaker (Dance Pantomime), Troupe 1000, Upper Darby Sr. High School, Frieda Reed and Maizie Weil, Sponsors

THEY DON'T NEED TO SPEAK

AFTER five years of experimentation with dance pantomime as children's entertainment, we are convinced that actors definitely *do not need to speak* in order to produce very effective and valuable entertainment for children. The idea was not original with us here in Upper Darby, for we gratefully give credit to Robert Moulton of the University of Minnesota who gave us the inspiration. At the Children's Theater Conference at Madison, Wisconsin, in 1952, we saw Mr. Moulton's production of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, and were so favorably impressed with the performance that we decided that this was a medium admirably suited to development in our Children's Theater program.

In our Children's Theater work, the dance pantomime does not replace the conventional children's play but supplements it. In evaluating any project in educational theater, it is necessary to take into consideration the values both for the audience and for the producers. We believe that the dance pantomime has real values for both groups. For the audiences of children, beyond the mere presentation of the story line, there is provided the opportunity for their hearing good music and being influenced by the rhythmical movement. While we have attempted to limit our audiences for these productions to the younger children, we have discovered that the appeal of the production covers a larger age span than the conventional play. Every worker in Children's Theater knows that for the younger children, it is the pantomimic telling of the story that holds the attention; in the dance pantomime, this appeal is exaggerated; the older children (and the adults) are

THEATER



FRIEDA E REED

FOR CHILDREN

charmed by the synthesis of movement, sound, and color.

For the high school producers all of the recognized values of work on the conventional play (except that of interpreting the spoken line) are present, and more. For the actor the training in developing vivid pantomime and rhythmical movement is invaluable, and for the student scene designer, the challenges are numerous. It is necessary that he capture the mood and spirit of the play in colorful sets; at the same time he has to take into consideration the matter of achieving effective background for the production, keeping the scenery from usurping too much of the stage, and keeping pieces that need to be shifted sufficiently small and mobile so that they can be moved rhythmically as a part of the production. (We don't close the curtain from the beginning until the end of the production.) In our production of *The Elves and the Shoemaker* the buildings representing the town as background were painted in perspective, and while they gave the illusion of distance, they occupied relatively little space on the stage.

In the dance pantomime we have found that it is possible to take considerable liberties imaginatively with the story without doing violence to the child's concept of the basic tale. For instance, in our dance version of *Little*

Red Riding Hood our student choreographer developed a most effective scene in the forest through which Little Red had to pass from her home to Grandmother's cottage. The forest was composed of "trees" that were dancers costumed in flowing cheese cloth costumes to suggest tree trunks with arm and head pieces of celastic "branches." This "forest" became an integral part of the action of the play as well as background since the "trees," by their movement, tried to warn Little Red against loitering along the way. Further liberties were taken with the traditional story by the choreographer, who peopled this forest with a variety of creatures besides the traditional wolf. A squirrel, a bear, a pair of rabbits, and a bird—all provided logical playmates for the little girl on her way to her grandmother's house. This is merely one example of the endless possibilities for imaginative treatment of a familiar story without doing violence to the truth of the tale, and the children love such embellishments.

We use a narrator and have experimented with various handlings of this device. In *Sleeping Beauty*, the narrator, a delicate, fairy-like girl, stood just inside the proscenium arch at stage left and used the necessary story telling to help the audience make the required adjustments from place to place. For *Little Red Riding Hood* we used one of our most mature actresses, who sat just inside the proscenium at stage right, and from an over-sized story book seemed to read the parts of the story that suggested the necessary orientation of the audience. In the *Elves and the Shoemaker* we used our best actress, dressed as a fourth elf. She sat on the edge of the stage, established direct contact with the audience, and took them

RECOMMENDED PLAYS FOR CHILDREN

Modern Plays

Crazy Cricket Farm
The Ghost of Mr. Penny
Little Lee Bobo
Mr. Popper's Penguins
Mystery at the Old Fort
The Panda and the Spy
Seven Little Rebels

Historical Plays

Arthur and the Magic Sword
Buffalo Bill
Daniel Boone
The Indian Captive
Marco Polo
The Prince and the Pauper
Young Hickory

Fairy-Tale Plays

Alladdin and the Wonderful Lamp
Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves
Alice in Wonderland
Cinderella
The Elves and the Shoemaker
Flibbertygibbet
The Good Witch of Boston
Jack and the Beanstalk
King Midas and the Golden Touch
The Land of the Dragon
Little Red Riding Hood
Peter Peter, Pumpkin Eater
Pinocchio
The Plain Princess
Prince Fairyfoot
The Princess and the Swineherd
The Puppet Prince
Puss in Boots
Rapunzel and the Witch
Rumpelstiltskin
Simple Simon
The Sleeping Beauty
Snow White and Rose Red
The Three Bears
The Wizard of Oz
The Wonderful Tang

Plays of Popular Stories

Five Little Peppers
Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates
Hansel and Gretel
Heidi
Hiawatha
Huckleberry Finn
Little Women
The Nuremberg Stove
Oliver Twist
The Pied Piper of Hamelin
Rip Van Winkle
Robin Hood
Robinson Crusoe
The Sandalwood Box
Tom Sawyer
Treasure Island

The plays listed above will be found fully described and illustrated in our catalogue

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into her confidence as to what was about to happen. This was a most successful device, but we shall probably continue to experiment, being influenced to a great extent by the type of story being interpreted.

During the years that we have experimented with this medium of Children's Theater, we have evolved a basic procedure. From our group of over a hundred Thespian members and apprentices we always have some trained dance students, who are also trained in dramatics, both in our regular dramatics classes and in our classes in student directing. Since the production in dance pantomime has become a popular area in our dramatics program, from our trained students each year there emerges the right one to choreograph and student direct the production. While the actual production process occupies only about five weeks in the spring, the planning usually begins, along with our other activities, at the beginning of the school year. The story to be used having been decided by the director, technical director, and student choreographer, the student director then proceeds to develop the narration script. (This year's production will be a dance version of *The Pied Piper*.) After the script has been agreed upon, the set or sets are then designed, under the close supervision of the technical director, usually by one of her students trained in scene design class. Then comes the

process of listening to music which satisfactorily interprets the story. Since this process often requires many hours of listening, selecting, cutting, and adapting, it is important that plenty of time is allowed. With this pre-planning done the next step is selection of the cast. Tryouts for our dance pantomime proceed from the group to the individual. The group assembled for tryouts listens to portions of the music selected by the directors and choreographer. After the group has achieved a listening-responsiveness to the music, portions are replayed, and the group is asked to respond rhythmically as the music suggests. Gradually selections of the music chosen for certain interpretations are again replayed, and specific students are asked to do what the music suggests. Thus by this gradual process there emerge those students who seem fitted for specific roles.

From this point our usual organization for any of our productions is in operation: the trained stage crew, under the direction of the technical director, builds and paints sets, makes props, designs

lights, tapes the music, and co-ordinates the whole technical phase of production. Simultaneously the cast is developing its interpretation; the costume committee is developing costumes from designs produced by a student designer; makeup is being developed by a trained makeup crew; publicity and ticket committees are taking care of promotion through the elementary schools. Finally, at the end of the five-week production period the dance pantomime is performed for two audiences, about 1500 children.

We feel that in a tightly scheduled dramatics program, this dance pantomime, along with a three-performance production of the conventional Children's Play, provides an excellent variation in Children's Theater. One very real advantage for the high school producers is the encouragement of creativity. While the production of the script of a play is beyond the high school student because of his lack of training, experience, maturity, and wisdom, the development of a simple narrative with imaginative detail that can be interpreted through music and movement is definitely within his scope. It can be a most challenging, satisfying, and rewarding experience.

Through five years of work and experimenting we have seen the interest grow both in our audiences and among our high school producers, and can recommend this medium to all Thespians who want to grow themselves and be a real service to the community.

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Thespian Chatter

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Troupe 1240

Shirley Ball, former Thespian of Troupe 1240, Arsenal Technical School, won the Miss Indiana segment of the 1959 Miss Universe Contest last June. Shirley was a graduate of Tech in 1957. She plans to become a model.

Being a beauty queen is nothing new to Shirley. In our production of *The Robe* she played the beautiful and alluring Salome. In *Best Foot Forward* she was Miss Delaware Water Gap of 1957. Her entrances onstage always brought a reaction from the audience. When she was not in plays, she was our head usherette and was very adept in her job.

Nineteen year old Shirley is very happy with her title. She competed for the second segment of the contest at Long Beach, California. This segment was for the title of Miss U.S.A. — Schorling Schneider, President

GLENVIEW, ILLINOIS

Troupe 1159

The Initiation and Awards Banquet, May 22, climaxed an eventful year for the Glenbrook High School Thespians. *Our Town*, produced last fall, was a smashing success. A theater dance followed the final performance. The *Our Town* theme prevailed throughout the dance. In November 150 dramatic club members attended a performance of *My Fair Lady*.

Happy Journey, *Trusting Place*, and a cutting of *The Little Foxes* were presented as three one-acts. *The Little Foxes* was entered into competition and placed first in district and sectional contests. It then advanced to state. Senior Bonnie Lemley (who played the part of Regina) and Junior Rich Kueny (who portrayed Horace) were included in the All-State cast. This is the second year Bonnie has received this honor.

TV celebrity, Ken Nordine, entertained the drama club with an evening of poetry this spring. — Judy Appel, Corresponding Secretary

ARROYO GRANDE, CALIF.

Troupe 1019

The curtain rose rapidly for Troupe 1019 as the year 1957-58 was an extremely busy one. Our first major activity was the three-act play, *Nine Girls*, which was played to a highly appreciative audience.

In order to raise money for much needed theatrical equipment the Arroyo Thespians staged and produced a fashion show. The theme was *Mardi Gras*, and the refreshments, entertainment, and decorations carried out this idea. "The best ever" was the comment heard everywhere after this production.

A few weeks later the group gave its annual student-directed three one-act plays. They were judged by drama teachers in this area. The winning director was presented a plaque which is displayed in the school trophy case.

The finale was the Thespian Banquet held in May. The speaker of the evening was a professional actor and director who told of his experiences in show business. New officers were installed and awards to all worthy Thespians presented. — Kay Kirkpatrick, Secretary

DENISON, TEXAS

Troupe 1609

Highlighting the 1957-58 season for Thespian Troupe 1609 was a "Night of One-Act Plays" presented by the drama department. As you doubtlessly have heard, Texans do things in a big way or not at all, and our undertaking was certainly no exception. First and second year speech students combined talents to present *Balcony Scene*, *The Ghost of a Show*, *The Camel* and *the Vampire*, and the Interscholastic League entry, *A Young Lady of Property*.

During the year two holiday plays were sponsored and produced by Thespians for

student assemblies. *A Note to Myself* was a Thanksgiving presentation, and the Christmas assembly was *Christmas at Lourdes*, a tale of Saint Bernadette. — Margaret Manning, Secretary

PITTSBURG, TEXAS

Troupe 1129

The Thespians, the core of the Curtain Time Club, has had a very active year. Our biggest project was sponsoring the One-Act Play Festival. We presented three plays: *A Mad Breakfast*, *The Dancers*, and *Command Performance*.

This year for the first time, our principal had prepared a club calendar, which permitted each club to meet thirty minutes once a month. By participating in the programs presented at the meetings, many students were able to earn points for the Thespian Society. Our principal, Mr. Acker, thought these programs worked out very nicely.

Some of the skits that were presented at these meetings were *Fair Exchange*, *If Men*

Played Cards as Women Do, and *Over the Big Puddle*. The speech class presented a play for the student body. It was entitled *One by One*. We also presented several pantomimes at the homemaking meetings. — Judy Lawson, Scribe

LANSING, ILLINOIS

Troupe 18

As we look back over our 1957-58 season, we thespians have had a year that will long be remembered. Our successful production of *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* encouraged us to attempt further classics in years to come. We followed this production by the All School Variety Show, *Minstrel Daze*. In December we cast our cutting of *Our Town*, which we took on tour of eight high schools in Illinois. *Our Town* was most successful. We placed 1st in the District, 2nd in the Sectional, and 6th in the State Speech finals at the University of Illinois.

Spring brought the casting of our final production, *The Teahouse of the August Moon*, presented in April. It was both a financial and theatrical success. Our dramatic year was culminated by hosting the Northern Regional Drama Festival for the National Thespian Society on May 3, 1958. All this, and a spanking brand new high school and beautiful auditorium contributed to a most successful and memorable year.

1959 — REGIONAL CONFERENCES — 1959

FLORIDA (Central)

Boone Sr. H. S., Orlando, Paul M. Fague, Sponsor, Troupe 177, Program Chairman; Charles Trumbo, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 728, Bartow, Fla., H. S., March 7.

FLORIDA (North)

Roosevelt Hotel, Jacksonville, Ardath E. Pierce, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 942, Fletcher High School, Jacksonville Beach, March 6, 7.

GEORGIA

University of Georgia, Athens, Hubert A. Jernigan, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1128, Avondale High School, Avondale Estates, final date not yet set.

INDIANA (Northern)

Elkhart, Ind., High School, D. J. Bussard, Sponsor, Troupe 653, Program Chairman; Juanita Shearer, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 872, Senior High School, Brazil, Ind., April 18.

NEW YORK

Drama Festival, State University of N.Y. Agricultural and Tech. Institute, Alfred, New York, Mort Clark, Program Chairman; Robert Timerson, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1286, Trumansburg High School, April 29-May 3.

OREGON

Oregon State College, Corvallis, Melba Day Sparks, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 124, Jefferson High School, Portland, March 6, 7.

PENNSYLVANIA (All-State)

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, Dr. W. H. Walters, Head Department of Drama, Host; Margaretta Hallock, Sponsor, Troupe 520, William Penn Sr. High School, York, and Regional Director for Eastern Pennsylvania, and Jean Donahay, Sponsor, Troupe 187, J. A. Broshear High School, Brownsville, and Regional Director for Western Pennsylvania, co-chairmen, April 4.

WASHINGTON

Wenatchee, Wash., High School, Lillian Grace Brown, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 469, April 18.

WEST VIRGINIA

State Drama Festival, University of West Virginia, Mr. Sam Boyd, Program Chairman; Harry Leeper, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 3, Fairmont High School, March 19, 20, 21.

BROADWAY LINE-UP

ALVIN THEATER — *Bells Are Ringing*, Judy Holliday. Musical comedy.

BECK — *Say Darling*, Eddie Albert. Musical drama.

BARRYMORE — *Look Homeward, Angel*, Miriam Hopkins. Drama.

BOOTH — *Two for the Seesaw*, Anne Bancroft, Dana Andrews. Comedy.

CORT — *Sunrise at Campobello*, Ralph Bellamy, Mary Fickett. Drama.

HELLINGER — *My Fair Lady*, Edward Mulhare, Sally Ann Howes. Musical comedy.

LONGACRE — *Pleasure of His Company*, Cyril Ritchard, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Charlie Ruggles, Walter Abel. Comedy.

MAJESTIC — *Music Man*, Robert Preston, Barbara Cook. Musical comedy.

NATIONAL — *Once More with Feeling*, Joseph Cotton, Arlene Francis. Comedy.

PLYMOUTH — *Marriage-Go-Round*, Charles Boyer, Claudette Colbert. Comedy.

ROYALE — *La Plume de Ma Tante*, Robert Dhery. Revue.

WINTER GARDEN — *West Side Story*, Carol Lawrence, Larry Kert. Musical.

HAYES — *Touch of the Poet*, Helen Hayes, Eric Portman, Betty Field, Kim Stanley. Drama.

BEREA, OHIO

I believe it is safe to say that the largest dramatic production of Berea High School was *The King and I*, presented November 22 and 23, 1958. This endeavor was a correlation of almost every department of the school. During the three months of rehearsal, the music, dramatics, art, commercial, physical education, home economics, and photography departments were involved, plus the efforts of numerous other students in varied capacities.

To obtain the King's thirteen children, we drew upon the parents of the town of Berea. We also turned to Berea and Baldwin-Wallace College, as well as Berea High School, for the musicians in the orchestra. Involving a cost of \$1500, the production played to audiences of over 1000 each night.

At first glance this musical appeared to be an impossible task, but an unabridged version was presented, and it ran quite smoothly. It has established a precedent which we must follow. — Penny Gray, President

Troupe 612

pecially proud of this year's *Ladies of the Mop*. It received a I rating at the state speech contest and a Superior rating, as well as two outstanding actress awards, at an invitational play festival at Iowa University.

One whole PTA program was devoted to speech. Several centers were set up in various rooms with students performing their contest pieces.

This year FHS was host to the preliminary speech contest. We had fifteen individual entries and our one-act play. We attended the district and state contests, eight individuals and the one-act reaching the state finals.

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Finally, we institute a Summer Theater program at our high school this summer for high school and incoming freshmen students. We anticipate its success. — Virginia Valiska, Secretary

WAR, W. VA.

Troupe 260

Thespian Troupe 260 had a very prosperous and successful year. At a candlelight ceremony during February, thirty-one new members were initiated into the troupe, making a total of sixty-one members. A March of Dimes program was presented to the student body by the new members.

Our troupe gave the programs at school to signify the meaning of our holidays. On April 10th and 11th our senior Thespians presented *Jane Eyre*, the most dramatic of all love stories. It took time and patience for the characters and the director, but it was worth it, for it turned out a tremendous success.

At our annual banquet officers for the coming year were installed by the out-going president. Best Girl and Boy Thespians of the Year awards were presented by our director, Miss Helen Kantor, who is leaving us this year.

Next year many familiar faces will be missing from our troupe, but may each active member strive to uphold the honor of our troupe; for if we have honor, we have the first step to success. — Martha Gray, Secretary

ROBBINSDALE, MINN.

Troupe 352

Combining all types of drama was the aim of Robbinsdale High School this past season. The fall play, *Solid Gold Cadillac*, proved to be as much a success on the RHS stage as it was on Broadway.

Planning for the spring production was underway in October, and the community was amazed by the fact that a high school was attempting Rodgers' and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* With wagon sets, a full scale smoke-house, a large barnyard and authentic scenery, which included a surrey, the musical drew rave reviews for each of its four performances. The staff included two directors, a 25 piece orchestra, a chorus of 30, 12 dancers, and the regular leads.

Experimental, serious drama followed with Jean Anouilh's adaptation of Sophocles' *Antigone*. We used formalistic sets on levels, modern dress, and shafts of light to create the mood. *The Rivals*, by Sheridan, was used, in part, for a one-act declamation play. — Thomas Phillips, President

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for senior girls called "KQTV Sweethearts." Two of our girls entered, one singing and giving an interpretive reading, the other giving a humorous reading on life at FHS. It was written by another of our Thespians.

Inasmuch as we hadn't enough time to plan and build a float for our Homecoming parade, four of our troupe volunteered to become "Emmet Kelly's." They distributed balloons with GO FONDA, etc., written on them to the children. The signs declared them members of Thespian Troupe 241. We'll never know if they helped us to victory, but they all admit it was fun!

Our initiation is held in the spring in conjunction with the National and Junior Honor Societies. Last year we portrayed music, drama, and dance, and installed five honorary members. — Karol DeMoss, Scribe

FAIRMOUNT, INDIANA

Troupe 682

Thespian Troupe 682 was quite busy last year. The members helped with the junior play, *New Boy in School*, and the sophomore



Shirley Ball, contestant for the 1958 Miss Universe title, Troupe 1240, Arsenal Technical High School, Indianapolis, Ind., Robert Maloy, Sponsor

one-act plays, *Modern Cinderella*, *N for Nuisance*, and *The Valiant*. The speech department presented a talent show which was hailed as a great success by all who attended.

The Thespians of Troupe 682 also worked on the senior play, *Annie Get Your Gun*. They found the play very enjoyable and fascinating. The cast and the audience loved the vitality and color of this unusual and famous play.

Adeline Nall, speech teacher at Fairmount High School, directed the play, which was presented April 10th and 11th. — Sandy Nottingham, Secretary

ASHTABULA, OHIO

Troupe 188

The chapel is dark except for the dim glow of the sanctuary lamp. A dark figure approaches the old baroness kneeling in prayer. Quickly the figure thrusts a gleaming knife into the back of the old baroness. She staggers and falls to the floor as the mysterious figure disappears into the shadows.

This is the startling climax of the first scene of this year's major production, *Murder in a Nunnery* — a delightful blend of mystery and comedy that was a challenge and a pleasure to produce.

The St. John High Dramatic Club began this year's activities with a pantomime of *The Littlest Angel*, which we ourselves adapted from the book. Basic items, such as angel hair,

gold foil, sheets, glitter, wire, and stepladders were transformed with a little ingenuity into a celestial paradise, complete with clouds and golden stairs.

The Dramatic Club planned a dance, "The Footlight Frolic," to raise money for Thespian pins. The highlight of the dance will be a floor show, portraying scenes of American History in song, dance, and comedy. — Kathe Fitzgerald, President

GOODLAND, KANS.

Troupe 974

The members of the dramatics club of Sherman Community High School, were very busy this year.

They gave two plays. The juniors, the new members, presented *Turn Back the Clock*, and the seniors plus the juniors gave *What a Life*. They all had fun working on the plays with the usual jokes and cut-ups of the overly-ambitious members.

The members decided it was about time the stage needed a new face so they took the big step and purchased new props.

The Kiwanis Club received their efficient services in helping to apply make-up for the annual Minstrel Show the proceeds of which go to help under privileged children of the community. — Phyllis Liljegren, Scribe

STAMBAUGH, MICH.

Troupe 215

In the fall of 1957 Thespian Troupe 215 presented *The Family Nobody Wanted*, a three-act which was entertainingly humorous, even though it had the theme of racial tolerance. At the annual Christmas party, seven new members were initiated. The Iron River Troupe 475 invited Troupe 215 to a joint Christmas party held at Iron River High School. They presented a one-act play. This was followed by a lunch and a social hour. The two schools follow an exchange ticket policy. In May three one-act plays were presented: *The Trysting Place*, *The Knave of Hearts*, and *Quiet Please*. A spaghetti banquet was held May 24. At the last regular meeting nine members were initiated and officers for the following year elected. — Bonnie Anderson, Secretary.

WOODRIDGE, N. Y.

Troupe 1488

Troupe 1488 had a more than successful year in 1957-58. Fifteen new members were added to our Thespian Troupe, more than ever before in the history of Fallsburgh Central.

Three performances were put on this year: "The Recognition Scene" from *Anastasia*, a scene from *Joan of Lorraine* and *Twelve Angry Women*. All three won grand acclaim, especially the magnificent performance of *Twelve Angry Women*.

We hope that next year will bring us better support. It is expected that two three-act plays and several shorter ones will be produced. Due to the opening of our new school we should be able to overcome many of our present school's physical problems. — Robert Rittner, Scribe

FRANKFORT, KY.

Troupe 1757

On Saturday night, April 26, Thespian Troupe 1757 of Elkhorn High School, held its annual formal banquet in the dining room of the Hotel Southern with members, parents, and guests attending.

During the course of the program twelve initiates were admitted officially into the troupe by the formal Candlelight Initiation and recitation of the Pledge, led by the sponsor, Mrs. Herbert Weddington. Twenty-six stars were presented to other members, making two of them four star Honor Thespians. These were seniors, William McQueen and John Duvall. Honorary membership was bestowed upon Mrs. J. W. Colvin, a former speech teacher at Elkhorn. The Best Thespian certificate and letter was awarded to John Duvall.

The program was high-lighted when Troupe President John Duvall, who is a former president of the Kentucky Interscholastic League,

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THUNDER IN THE SUN, outdoor drama, Susan Hayward, Jeff Chandler. (PAR)

THE REMARKABLE MR. PENNYPACKER, comedy, Clifton Webb, Dorothy McGuire. (20TH-FOX)

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, drama, Millie Perkins, Joseph Schildkraut. (20TH-FOX)

SHADOW OF A GUN MAN, western, Charles Bronson, John Carradine. (20TH-FOX)

SEPARATE TABLES, drama, Deborah Kerr, Burt Lancaster. (UA)

THE BAT MASTERSON STORY, western, Joel McCrea, Nancy Gates. (UA)

PERFECT FURLOUGH, comedy, Tony Curtis, Janet Leigh. (UNIV-INT-L)

WESTBOUND, outdoor drama, Randolph Scott, Virginia Mayo. (WAR)

THE HANGING TREE, western, Gary Cooper, Maria Schell. (WAR)

society sponsored a play by the Bradley University Theater group, which was William Shakespeare's *The Twelfth Night*. This performance was enjoyed by many.

Directors and assistant directors were selected from the senior members of Thespians to produce the three one-act plays: *They Put on a Play*, *Sorry, Wrong Number*, and *How To Propose*. The casts consisted mainly of juniors, sophomores, and freshmen. The plays were a great success.

Troupe 1120 held two initiations this year. The first one was on February 4, and an initiation picnic on May 7. The activities of this year's Thespian group stimulated much interest among the students of Princeton High School. — Ruth Horton, Secretary

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presented to Mrs. Weddington the gold plaque won by the Troupe for achievement and participation in the Regional Speech Festival at Eastern State College in Richmond, Kentucky. —David Blakeman, Scribe

MERIDIAN, IDAHO

Troupe 875

In its eleventh year Thespian Troupe 875 initiated 14 new members. This increase resulted mainly from the large cast in our courtroom play, *The People versus Maxine Lowe*.

Members of Troupe 875 also did the one-act drama, "Recognition Scene" from *Anastasia*, which placed first in district festival and tied for first in the regional festival this year. In Idaho the regional is equivalent of a state festival.

For the first time our Troupe produced a children's play, *Cinderella of Loreland* by Frances Homer. We did four performances — one for our high school, one for the adults, one for the grade schools in our district, and one for the grade school and junior high of a nearby town, Eagle, Idaho.

This play took determination and hard work to produce, the set changes being our greatest problem. However, the actual performances were fun, especially those for the younger children. — Vaughn Estrick, President

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Troupe 120

This year our Harlandale Troupe 120 produced two one-act plays in an unusual manner. We experimented with "theater in the round" using *Goodbye Miss Lizzie Borden* and *Shadow of a Dream*. This new style of acting proved quite a challenge to the cast members. Having the audience on all sides and the closeness of the audience had to be taken into consideration. Greater pains had to be taken with make-up and costuming. There are of course several advantages with this new style: movements are more easily perfected and the actor can be heard without difficulty. Everyone who worked on the play or took a part in it enjoyed this new experience, and we received many compliments on our cafeteria production. We hope to use this style again in our patio in the early fall months, as it was a most challenging experience to both the audience and the cast. — Sybil Henefield, Scribe

PRINCETON, ILLINOIS

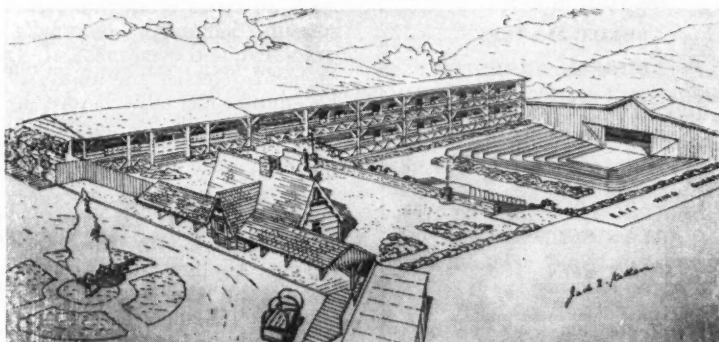
Troupe 1120

Thespian Troupe 1120 had a most active year. The year began with the members purchasing Thespian jewelry. In February the



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COLE PORTER

(Continued from Page 15)

lic Enemy No. 13), who was travelling to Europe disguised as the Reverend Dr. Moon. His favorite machine gun, "Putt-Putt," is with him constantly concealed in a bulging violin case. Since Porter had not been living in New York during the Twenties, it may be assumed that he was unaware of the innovations of Gershwin, Youmans, and Rodgers and Hart in the development of musical numbers as integral units of the plot. Still, in *Anything Goes*, Porter demonstrated that he too had the same idea. For example, when Dr. Moon, as the only minister aboard ship, is required to conduct the Sunday services in the lounge, he in desperation calls on Reno Sweeney to help him by returning to her previous profession as an evangelist. The result was "Blow, Gabriel, Blow," an outstanding Cole Porter song. Porter too demonstrated his sensitive ear for phrases and the idiomatic speech of the day with such songs as "You're the Top," and "I Get a Kick Out of You." Porter had effectively demonstrated that he was a versatile musician and a master of clever lyrics.

As a painstaking craftsman and perfectionist Cole Porter usually begins with a title and the lyrics to fit the plot situation, and then writes the music. He is a perfectionist who works conscientiously with all types of dictionaries — rhyming foreign language, biographical, geographical, and even medical — constantly at hand. He has the ability of creating his music mentally before he touches the piano, and he carefully charts his musical numbers so that a slow tune will follow a fast one and a comedy song precedes a serious one. For example, the first act score of *Kiss Me Kate* begins with the gay "Another Op'nin', Another Show," followed in succession by the cynical ballad, "Why Can't You Behave?" the waltz parody, "Wunderbar," the sentimental ballad, "So in Love," and the rhythmic, "We Open in Venice." His lyrics, according to one critic, "brim with stylish grace and colloquial impudence, real comic inven-

tion, multi-syllabic rhymes, innuendoes about *l'amour*, digs at social foibles and easy allusions to famous people and far-off places." His music has been written for an amazing variety of contrasting plots.

In 1935 he wrote the music and lyrics for Moss Hart's *Jubilee* dealing with a king and queen (admirably played by Melville Cooper and Mary Boland), who use the threat of revolution to escape their thrones and their responsibilities to see how much fun life can really be. The following year he wrote the music for *Red, Hot and Blue*, and its characters included Jimmie Durante as "Policy" Pinkle of Larks Nest Prison; Ethel Merman as "Nails" O'Reilly, widow and ex-show girl; and a girl, lost since infancy, whose only mark of identification is the result of sitting on a hot waffle iron at the age of six. Porter borrowed from Shakespeare in *Kiss Me Kate* (1949) and turned to Greek mythology for the theme of *Out of This World* (1950). He has contributed some of Broadway's sauciest and yet most entertaining productions: *DuBarry Was a Lady* (1937), *Panama Hattie* (1940), *Let's Face It* (1941), *Something for the Boys* (1943), *Mexican Hayride* (1944), and *Can-Can* (1953), as well as the most delightful of topical satires: *Leave It to Me* (1938) and *Silk Stockings* (1955).

In 1949 Cole Porter contributed his best score to America's musical theater with *Kiss Me Kate*. Dealing with the on-stage and off-stage rivalry of Fred Graham (Alfred Drake) and his ex-wife, Lilli Vanessi (Patricia Morison) as they "play the road" in *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Kiss Me Kate* aptly exemplified David Ewen's astute evaluation of a Cole Porter show: "brisk, sophisticated and slightly risqué verses wedded to music with long, sweeping lyric lines in a minor-mode languor and a throbbing irresistible rhythm." Cole Porter was able to combine the fresh exuberance of America with the cynical sophistication of the Continent and thus created a unique and highly-entertaining form of musical theater.

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PAGEANTRY

(Continued from Page 13)

quired research in the community to obtain your material.

You, as author, may decide what is to take place in each episode or scene; or you may distribute the episodes, giving a scene to each episode director who is appointed to help produce the pageant. By this method you will only confer with each episode director, find out what he has planned for the action of his particular scene, or episode, and then supply a minimum amount of dialogue for the main characters of the scene. This method has been considered quite satisfactory as it extends the participation. Members of the community concerned are responsible, and it is highly recommended if a community project is planned. However, there is no set rule to guide you, and this type of production cannot be done with pageant-dramas, such as *Unto These Hills* and *The Lost Colony*. Here the story or plot must further the action of the pageant as though it were a regular stage play.

A panoramic pageant is not bound by the traditional unities of drama. It must have some continuity of action or emotion to hold the various episodes together. Unity of idea is the only unity that is essential in pageantry. A mere collection of historical episodes cannot correctly be called a pageant unless they all express the same idea or all contribute to the building up of the central theme.

When you have gathered your material thoroughly and have made a careful selection of the important happenings in your community, following your outline your episodes should fall into place in chronological order and present to your audience one supreme idea. This idea is naturally the history and development of your community.

To enrich your pageant and to explain to your audience the setting, atmosphere, and historical background of each scene without their having to depend upon a printed program, the use of the old-fashioned herald or modern narrator is most helpful.

The herald was the forerunner of wiring and amplification. A good pair of lungs was a most helpful implement. At the present time where pageant-dramas continue at the same location from season to season, permanent wiring and amplification facilities can be built. The effective work of a narrator toward blending the scenes or episodes together and giving the entire pageant that certain smoothness was demonstrated effectively in the pageant-drama, *Florida Aflame*, at Lake Wales, Florida, and in the Cherokee drama, *Unto These Hills*. If you do not have the facilities for amplification, don't hesitate to use a herald.

It would be most effective if you could have your herald or narrator speak in blank verse. Come on, it doesn't have to equal Shakespeare—just use your

ordinary intelligence. Remember from your English classes that iambic pentameter or blank verse contains five feet to the line. An iambic foot contains one light accent followed by a heavy one and may be illustrated in your script on your typewriter as ' -. Such single words as *again*, *across*, *until*, etc., are examples of iambic feet. Now let's try it ourselves, it really isn't too difficult. We'll "make up" a few lines for your narrator while we're sitting here. The narrator in the prologue or prelude to your pageant could go something like this:

And as the sun sets on our native town

And shadows steal away 'till early dawn,

The folk of long ago who lived and loved

Come forth tonight to live again in play.

See how easy it is? There is nothing very intellectual involved. However, it will add much to the tone quality of your pageant if the narrator or herald is able to speak in verse in contrast to the prose speeches of your main characters.

Writing a pageant then is simply doing the research and making your outline; choosing your co-directors (scene or episode directors); putting your episodes into chronological order; and writing your dialogue. Last but not least you "knit" the whole together with a good descriptive narration.

"Let's get the show on the road."

OVERWORKED!

(Continued from Page 11)

than that of doing too much of the work personally is that of doing too much of the leadership directly. The director should appoint good, capable crew chiefs, go over their responsibilities with them carefully, and then let them decide and see to it that John and Mary paint that flat, that Bill and Mickey make that door frame, and that Keith and Pat adjust that spotlight. Let them do the leading. Watch the crew chairmen in action. Notice their techniques and methods of leadership. Confer with them and make suggestions as to how they can better succeed in leading, but let them do it. In this way you will aid educational theater in one of its finest purposes — that of developing leadership. The director will also be saving himself a great deal of work and worry.

The director should always be available for consultation on any technical problem a crew chief may encounter, but he should not be too quick to rush in with an answer. Let the students do their own thinking. It is surprising the solutions they can come up with. In fact, the author has many times been fronted with a problem on which he has been stumped. Many of these have been solved by his saying, "Well, Joe, it's your baby. You take care of it." Nine times out of ten, Joe will take care of it. If after a period it appears that it is one of those one-in-ten occasions, the director can then take the time to consider the problem.

Back stage, the student stage manager should be the boss. Appoint a leader and consider him as such. If something goes wrong, say with the lights, don't consult the boy you know is on the light board, but ask the stage manager for the cause of the trouble. They will find the cause, and the stage manager's position will be respected. Such a leader will take much responsibility off the director's shoulders. Needless to say, the director must back up the stage manager and crew chiefs in their decisions. This does not need to be done blindly, but any disagreement must be handled tactfully.

In addition to these more mechanical parts of the theater there is the area of design where oftentimes a student may do an excellent job. It may be thought that if students are not capable of directing because it is too complex a job, they would not be capable of the equally complex task of scene design or costume design. There is one big difference, however. In directing you are working with people, thus individual differences and complex personalities. In design the product is on paper and can be watched and helped before the actual construction begins. In the art classes there are potential designers who already have a good foundation in color, line, and composition. The drama teacher needs merely help transfer this

knowledge to the media of scene design. Texts on the subject may be assigned. While there are not too many high school texts that treat with design, the more capable students who are likely the ones who will do this work anyway, can understand some of the more basic chapters from college texts on fundamentals. The director by then conferring with the student, discussing the interpretation of the play, explaining the directorial demands on the design for such things as area and elevation, going over the design again and again making criticisms and suggestions, and giving all the help he can, can help the student create a set that will be extremely satisfactory. The same process can be used with costumes and lighting. On the surface this may appear to be more work than actually designing the set yourself, but the director can have these conferences during the lunch hour in the cafeteria, or for fifteen or twenty minutes before or after school. These short periods are a far cry from the many hours the director needs to design the set himself.

Moving over the footlights into the business side of theater, all experienced directors know that there is very little that the students can't do in this area. It may take some convincing to persuade the principal that the students can handle the money, but it is a fact that they can do so, and also enjoy it. Most teen-agers have not worked with money in terms of hundreds of dollars, but they are eager to try it and are quite impressed with the responsibility. The director merely needs to give them a simple method of accounting for their funds so that they know where they are and don't feel bewildered and confused, and consequently, insecure.

There are many students, who, like adults, enjoy working with people. Use these students to handle the box office, the ticket board, and the taking of telephone reservations. While this is most likely not part of the director's job now, it will free the other teachers to whom these jobs are often assigned. There is no better method of building rapport for your program with the other faculty members than by giving them another free evening.

The last area to consider is that of publicity. The only function the director needs to do here is to keep the lid down. With their very vivid and active imaginations, teen-agers can handle this job much better than the staid adult. Some of their wilder schemes may have to be stepped on, but otherwise let them go. The journalism students can write the news-releases for the press, radio, and television. They should be given a schedule as to when stories should appear, and then held to it. Conferences can be held as to the type and tone of publicity that is appropriate for each play, but let the students do the actual writing.

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In looking back over these suggestions, one may conclude that in the long run it would be easier for the director to do it himself. It is strange though that these "do-it-yourself" people are always the ones who are dashing frantically from this place to that, their hair awry, and a harried look dominating their flitting eyes. There are just too many straws available, and their backs come close to breaking.

Student participation does free the director from many long hours of detail work, but it also calls for something on the part of the director. He must carefully organize the long range program and the schedule for each play. Much of the students' work is by trial and error, and time must be allowed for the error. As the program progresses however, the present junior and sophomores become seniors, and if they have served a good apprenticeship, they are going to benefit from the errors of last year's seniors. Less time and less supervision will be called for each year.

Regardless of how it may appear, this article is not intended at developing a program to help lazy directors. The benefit of shorter hours on the part of the teacher is only incidental. The main purpose of this program is to aid the major aim of secondary school theater — to give to the student training and instruction in theater, leadership, and living. The entertainment aim is protected by the director's supervision, and not by his action. The pleasure of working in the theater comes from the same source as the pleasure in the practice of all art — in the contribution of the individual to the finished product. The director is robbing his students if he is doing all the planning, creating and the actual work.

CHILDREN'S OPERA

(Continued from Page 10)

times into the other company if there are new children whom they feel need the help of the seasoned performers, and they are happy to do it!

At rehearsals a child in the chorus may be asked to read the role of one of the leads, and so the Gingolds are able to watch the developing dramatic and vocal talents of their young artists.

Each opera has its own costumes, and the week before the performance, each child picks up the box prepared for him or her by Mr. and Mrs. Gingold, and will find the appropriate costume for his role. Mothers may have to fix a hem here or take in a seam there, add a scarf or flower for a "country girl" or press the uniform of a king's page, and all is ready for the performance.

There are no dress rehearsals, but there is one rehearsal, also a week before production, on stage at the theater. Otherwise the children rehearse at rehearsal rooms at the big old-fashioned house, where the Gingolds have their living quarters above.

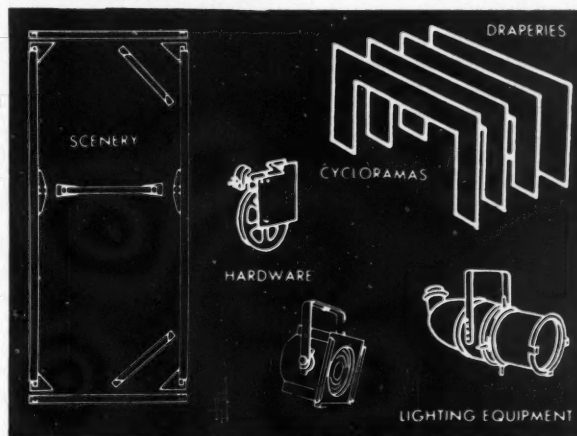
Each opera too has its own scenery, and Mr. Gingold has a small corps of workers who shift and put the scenery in place, are responsible for props, and take everything back to the Gingold menage when the show is over.

Mr. and Mrs. Gingold insist on professional regulations for the young performers. Children may not arrive at the theater in make-up or costume, or appear in the audience until the performance is over. Mrs. Gingold manages behind stage and Norbert plays the piano and conducts the orchestra for all performances.

The parents have formed a Board, and act as Directors, Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers of the Children's Opera Association. They try to see that things run smoothly out front by taking tickets, selling programs, and ushering. Some also help with the enormous amount of secretarial work necessary for the mailing of notices which go out monthly to a large mailing list of people who want to be kept informed of performance dates. A few devoted mothers help Heddy Gingold with the making and repairing of costumes.

In addition of course everyone connected with Children's Opera tries to promote attendance at performances by selling tickets, persuading church groups to bring groups of children, suggesting it as a birthday treat, etc. Extra benefit performances are often requested, and then the house is taken over by the sponsoring group who fix their own prices and sell their own tickets, but this is always in addition to the regularly scheduled performances.

As for the songs and the scripts, every parent whose child is in Children's Opera is delighted with the wholesome, whimsical, full-of-fun pattern of the operas. The music and lyrics are delightful, a little reminiscent of Gilbert and Sullivan,



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but essentially in terms of what children can understand. But the parents too love the melodies that the children come home singing from rehearsals, and then later watching the performance, enjoy the charming songs they have heard their children practising for the previous two months—and everyone finds themselves singing the songs for weeks afterwards.

A few young adults are members of the companies, some of whom are professional or aspiring singers and others who are studying and working in local musical and dramatic schools. They take appropriate roles, both male and female, in different operas. They too are very enthusiastic about Children's Opera and love to work with the Gingolds and the cast of children.

The scenery, costumes, and everything else pertaining to the opera are kept at the Gingold home. Heddy and Norbert take a minimum salary for all their devotion of time and energy, for the whole of their lives revolve around the children and development of their musical talents, and bringing wholesome entertainment to a constantly growing audience in San Francisco and nearby communities.

Almost every show is a sell-out, performances taking place on Sunday afternoons, when several hundred happily anticipating youngsters from the ages of two to about sixteen descend on the Marines' Memorial Theater. There are very few tickets available on performance day, for all tickets for the most part sell quickly as soon as they are available through a local ticket agency or by mail from the Children's Opera Association.

All performers must be at the theater an hour before curtain time, when they dress and make-up. All details are supervised by Mrs. Gingold, who approves and makes suggestions for slight changes.

There is the bustle of last minute scenery shifting, the last frantic look at scripts, vocalizing by the leads, and the noise and excitement of the arriving audience. Soon there is the tuning up of the orchestra, and suddenly there is the call for "on stage." A few mothers stay behind to help with any quick changes, but most of them go out front to watch the performance.

During the two intermissions (during which many of the young audience get impatient waiting for the curtain to rise again!) some of the mothers rush backstage to help fix make-up, hair or a costume, and of course to hear the excited chatter of their youngsters: "How am I doing?" "Oh, I was so nervous when I first went on—" "Did you notice that so-and-so forgot her lines?" and so on. And at the end of the performance when friends and admirers may come backstage, there are the congratulations and the feeling of achievement, for not only has an audience of children gone away joyously surfeited with delightful entertainment, but the participants have achieved satisfaction on a creative and artistic level, developing poise, musical knowledge, and appreciation.

One little fact illustrates how much the children who belong enjoy Children's Opera. Every year the Gingolds give a party, and what do the kids do but sit Mr. Gingold at the piano, and everyone sings the songs from the operas they have been singing all year.

BRIEF VIEWS

By WILLARD FRIEDERICH



ON THE ART OF THE THEATRE by Edward Gordon Craig. 1957, Theatre Arts Books; 296 pp.

Another famous book which shook the theater world in 1911 has now been reprinted, this time with a new foreword and selection of drawings by the author, who is still alive. Unlike Shaw's book, however, this one does not read quite so well as it did when we were young. While we hope that idealism and vision have not left us completely, some twenty years of working in the theater have taught us that it is easier to write glowing mystic accounts of a "new theater of perfection" than to put such ideas into everyday practice. (In fact history recounts that even Mr. Craig himself, given every assistance by the Moscow Art Theater, could not effectively carry out his own visionary dreams — though he, naturally, blamed it on everyone but himself.) Nevertheless it is probably good for the new generation to experience the magnetism of Gordon Craig and to thrill once more to his pleas for perfection in design, directing, acting, playwrighting, and even the audience's attitude. If at times one fails to understand clearly just what is wanted, there certainly are many other times when the author is almost prosaically precise: "The ideal actor will be the man who possesses both a rich nature and a powerful brain"; in the actor "emotion is the cause which first of all creates, and secondly destroys"; "It is bad art to make so personal, so emotional, an appeal that the beholder forgets the thing itself while swamped by the personality, the emotion, of its maker"; and so on. Likewise, modern practice has accepted and put into common practice — especially in the educational theater — several of Mr. Craig's once-revolutionary concepts: "It is impossible for a work of art ever to be produced where more than one brain is permitted to direct." For the sake of the practicable visions, the attainable inspirations, the truths adopted and being adopted, then, one is grateful for the book and glad to reread it — and one is also able to forgive the repetitiousness, the uncertain meanings, the impractical demands for mood scenery and the subjugation of the playwright and the actor, the artistic asceticism, and even Mr. Craig's protest that he never meant the Uber-marionettes to sweep the living actors from the stage.

THE PLAYWRIGHT'S ART by Robert M. Busfield, Jr. 1958, Harpers; 260 pp.

Prof. Busfield of Michigan State elaborates on the activities of the playwright from the acquirement of the "dramatic instinct," through the construction of a play, to the follow-through of putting it in rehearsal and marketing it. This is not a text book in the usual sense of the word, however, in that it rarely explicitly presents a set of rules for the novice to follow. Desirable and often-used rules are implied in the discussion, and occasionally even stated; but on the whole the reader will get primarily an attitude toward drama and a feel for what the playwright's job and product are like in the most successful instances. One of the most interesting and helpful aspects of the book is the author's liberal quoting of people who should know — famous playwrights, teachers, critics — as to their working principles and habits. Through their agreements and disagreements one can more clearly recognize what a flexible but tantalizing art is the art of dramatic writing.

The first quarter of the book deals with the background of the aspiring writer. Then Prof. Busfield goes into the more customary problems, such as finding dramatic material, subject versus theme, plot construction, characterization, and dialogue. The last quarter is devoted

to such not-so-frequent problems as actual writing procedures, writing with a collaborator, dramatizing or adapting other source materials, rehearsing the first production of a play, and selling or placing it for professional or amateur production. Two of the finest features of the book are an excellent bibliography on writing for the theater and a wonderful list of exercises for the beginner, garnered from the best ideas of over twenty of the outstanding university teachers of playwrighting in America.

PAPERS ON PLAYMAKING, edited by Brandner Matthews. 1957, Hill and Wang; 312 pp.

Another inexpensive paper-bound Drama-book, this is a reprint of one of the best books by the late Prof. Matthews of Columbia. In it are collected some of the best and, often, not too well-known statements by or about famous dramatists, actors, and critics on the art of playwrighting: Lope de Vega, Goethe, Goldoni, and others. All the selections are well translated and have excellent introductions that prepare the reader for fully appreciating what he is about to read. He will not, however, find a unanimity of opinion on how to write a play; rather he will be amazed at the opposing statements, the attempts to sidestep the whole problem with humorous evasions (for example, "It's very simple; the first act clear, the last act short, and all the acts interesting"), the professions of ignorance (Alexandre Dumas *fil*s says, "I'll own up that I don't know how to write a play"), the apparently enigmatic statements that, upon reflection, make more sense than one at first realizes (thus, Legouve says one writes a play "by beginning at the end"), the straight-forward descriptions of how the writer actually works (Bronson Howard's "Autobiography of a Play") versus the satiric description of how a fictitious writer proceeds in his work (W. S. Gilbert's "A Stage Play"). Out of it all, of course, there also emerge some fairly clear and definite notions about the basic principles that most successful playwrights and plays observe, best illustrated perhaps by Pinero's intelligent analysis of the failure of "Robert Louis Stevenson as a Dramatist," the French critic Sarcey's business-like explanation of "A Theory of the Theater," and the actor Coquelin's not-too-scholarly but always perceptive comparison of "Moliere and Shakespeare." This is tough, but tasty and digestible reading.

SHAW ON THE THEATRE, edited by E. J. West. 1958, Hill and Wang; 306 pp.

Prof. West of the University of Colorado has performed an unusual service in this book: he has selected a "tantalizing fraction" of the writings of Shaw that are not preserved in the nine volumes of the Standard Edition of his works and presented them in order of their writing from 1894 to 1950. All pertain in some way to the theater, and the majority of them are concerned with dramaturgy, the art of writing and producing plays. Among the most interesting are Shaw's defense of the realism of *Arms and the Man*, his ridicule of drama censorship in England, the handling of Elizabethan speech in Shakespeare, his explanations of the duties of a director and stage manager, and his comparison of professional playwrights and amateurs, to name only a few. The selections include essays, newspaper and magazine articles, program commentaries, letters, speeches, and prefaces, most of them long out of print, buried in the files of libraries and discontinued publications and, except for Prof. West's diligence, entirely beyond the reach of most of us. But now they are here, in one small, moderately priced book; and once again the good sense, cryptic paradoxes, wit and humor, real and

pretended egotism, and brilliant mind of Shaw are on display. The ideas are not new, of course, to anyone who has read the well-known Shaw volumes (he is still a social reformer seeking the truth through the art of a modernized theater), but at least these unfamiliar pieces repeat the familiar ideas and ideals in different and new versions — fascinating reading! Nothing Shaw has written reveals more forcefully and clearly the personality of "the phenomenon of his times" than do these bits and pieces that cover more than a half century of his life.

MAXWELL ANDERSON: THE PLAYWRIGHT AND PROPHET by Mabel Driscoll Bailey. 1957, Abelard-Schuman; 200 pp.

The aspiring playwright — or critic — can learn much from studying the works of one author and charting his strengths and weaknesses. Mrs. Bailey does this with the works of Anderson, and the reader will often find her judgments valuable and inspirational. In analyzing Anderson's total output, the author groups his works according to themes and styles, showing Anderson's growth as both craftsman and thinker. Believing that "art is a vehicle of communication," he has always stuck fast to his concept of the theme of tragedy: "victory in defeat, a man's conquest of himself in the face of annihilation. The last act of a tragedy contains the moment when the wheel of a man's fate carries him simultaneously to spiritual realization and to the end of his life." His subject matter has revolved around an ever-growing belief in the individual's personal will and freedom, even in the face of material temptations and governmental tyrannies and corruption. Mrs. Bailey's evaluations of his plays from these points of view are often sound and always provocative. If your reviewer is personally dubious about calling *High Tor* "one of the few unequivocally great of Maxwell Anderson's plays," he certainly agrees that the power of *Lost in the Stars* is yet to be fully realized. Surely, however, many who feel that much of Anderson is pessimistic would question Mrs. Bailey's assertion, "All of Mr. Anderson's fruits are on the side of hope and faith." But, agree or not agree, any reader of this well-written little book will learn a great deal about dramatic construction and criticism — to say nothing of gaining understanding of Maxwell Anderson.

THE QUINTESENCE OF IBSENISM by G. B. Shaw. Hill and Wang; 188 pp.

Prof. Eric Bentley, editor of the Dramabook series, of which this inexpensive reprint of Shaw's 1913 volume is a part, calls it a "work of genius, a work that can change men's minds." It is perhaps not untrue to say that, though it often expresses Shaw more than Ibsen and puts into Ibsen's head ideas that he probably never actually contemplated, a reader cannot really say he fully understands Ibsen until he has read this book most carefully. If Shaw is not always true to Ibsen in details, he is certainly true to him in spirit; and it is this overall spirit of a genius that is perhaps best felt and explained by another genius. Readers familiar with the previous editions will remember Shaw's vehement contention that Ibsen, contrary to fairly popular opinion, was not an idealist. "Existing facts, with their masks on, are to be called ideals, and the future possibilities which the masks depict are also to be called ideals," says Shaw; therefore the "man who is striving to realize the future possibilities by tearing the mask and the thing masked asunder" is rather to be called a "realist." Shaw then proceeds to demonstrate Ibsen as the great realistic iconoclast by analyzing each of his plays in chronological order, to show their author's gradual growth to the point where he renounces all codes and insists upon the "right of private judgment in questions of conduct as against all institutions." The famous closing statement — the only formula is "that there is no formula" — rings just as piercingly today as it did forty-five years ago. Anyone who hasn't read this book should read it now.

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However, these aren't the only problems in the play, for each person who comes in on the bus has a problem of his, or her own. There is Jack Freeman, a breezy young sailor on leave, who has come back to town to marry his childhood sweetheart, only to discover that she is going to marry another man. Jack eventually becomes attracted to Lyla Graham, a lovely but nervous girl, who has recently discovered that she was an adopted child and is in search of her real parents. Then there is a wealthy New York couple, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Kepler, who lost their only son in an automobile accident, and are startled by Jerry's resemblance to him. There is also a mysterious old lady, Irma Smith, who turns out to have been a once-glamorous silent motion picture star. Irma is instrumental in helping to patch up a romance between Donald Webster, a young business man, and Trudi Lynn, who was chosen Miss Midwest in a recent beauty contest, and is about to throw away marriage and happiness with Donald in favor of a motion picture and television career.

How all these very human problems are solved forms the basis of THE BUS STOPS HERE, which is a play that will delight any producing group. It is novel, interesting all the way through, has many moments of comedy as well as suspense, and can easily be staged on almost any size stage or platform.

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